

Message Text

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42

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 OIC-02 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12

CU-02 AGR-05 DOTE-00 HEW-04 HUD-01 INT-05 AID-05

CEQ-01 CIAE-00 ERDA-05 COME-00 EB-07 EPA-01 INR-07

L-03 NSF-01 NSC-05 NSAE-00 USIA-06 OES-06 SS-15 SP-02

PA-01 PRS-01 FEA-01 /143 W

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R 231336Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5409

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUWAIT 2499

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, UN, KU

SUBJ: UN CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT)

REF: (A) STATE 108167 (B) STATE 123153

1. EMBASSY REGRETS TARDINESS OF RESPONSE TO REF A. PRESS OF OTHER DUTIES INCLUDING PREPARATIONS FOR TRADE MISSION AND DEPARTURE FROM POST OF ECONCOUNS HAVE LIMITED TIME AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS HABITAT WITH GOK OFFICIALS. NEVERTHELESS, WE DID DISCUSS POINTS MADE REFTTEL WITH ABDULLA DAKHEEL AL-RASHEED, UNDERSECRETARY OF HOUSING AND DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY. HE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE OFFICIAL IN HOUSING AREA IN GOK AND HE HAS PARTICIPATED IN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETINGS REGARDING HABITAT.

2. DAKHEEL SAID GOK DEL WILL BE HEADED BY MINISTER OF HOUSING HAMAD MUBARAK AL-AYYAR. IN ADDITION JASSIM AL-SAYIGH OF KUWAIT UNIVERSITY, WHO IS ALSO MEMBER OF NHA, REPS FROM KUWAIT MUNICIPALITY AND PLANNING BOARD AND PROBABLY SOMEONE FROM KUWAIT UN

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3. WE CONVEYED POINTS NOTED IN REF A, HOWEVER, DAKHEEL INDICATED THAT KUWAIT FOUND GENERAL ISSUES BEING DISCUSSED AT HABITAT TO BE OF LITTLE LOCAL RELEVANCE. KUWAIT IS NOT POOR AND IS HIGHLY URBANIZED. MOREOVER, TRADITIONALLY GOK AVOIDS PUBLIC HOUSING AS PART OF ITS ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE EFFORTS, ALTHOUGH THIS BEGINNING TO CHANGE. AS FOR AVOIDANCE OF CONTROVERSIAL POLITICAL ISSUES WHICH ARE IRRELEVANT TO HABITAT ISSUES, DAKHEEL SAID GOK DEL WAS ESSENTIALLY TECHNOCRATIC IN MAKE-UP AND NOT POLITICAL, BUT HE COULD NOT ASSURE AVOIDANCE OF PALESTINIAN ISSUES.

4. COMMENT: DAKHEEL, WHO IS US EDUCATED AND ONE OF MOST IMPRESSIVE GOK OFFICIALS CANNOT ATTEND HABITAT BECAUSE OF PRESS OF OTHER DUTIES. HE IS MANAGING \$4 BILLION HOUSING PROGRAM, AND IN NEXT FEW WEEKS WILL HAVE TO PURSUE REQUEST FROM KUWAIT PARLIAMENT FOR SOME \$3 BILLION IN NEW FUNDING. MINISTER OF HOUSING IS POLITICIAN OF BEDOUIN STOCK WHOSE ENGLISH IS LIMITED. ALTHOUGH HE HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR SEVERAL YEARS FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS, INCLUDING CERTAIN SOCIAL ASPECTS OF HOUSING, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT HE WILL MAKE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO HABITAT. OTHER MEMBERS OF KUWAIT DEL ARE MIDDLE LEVEL OFFICIALS. IN SHORT, IT WILL NOT BE A STRONG DELEGATION. MOREOVER, GIVEN FEELING THAT HABITAT ISSUES ARE NOT ESPECIALLY RELEVANT TO KUWAIT AND GENERAL POLICY OF FOLLOWING ARAB CAUCUS AT CONFERENCES SUCH AS HABITAT, IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT GOK DEL WILL BE OF MUCH HELP IN AVOIDING DISCUSSION OF PALESTINIAN ISSUES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAND SETTLEMENT, MEETINGS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976KUWAIT02499
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760200-0708
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760523/aaaaatqw.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 108167, 76 STATE 123153
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <13 SEP 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UN CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT)
TAGS: SENV, KU, UN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006